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FROM: Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (The Wing)
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Wing Luke Museum to Open New Exhibit on WWII Japanese American Incarceration Through the Eyes of Artist Roger Shimomura and Poet Lawrence Matsuda

“Since Japanese Americans were the first to be taken, we must be the first to stand if it happens again.”
- Lawrence Matsuda

Seattle, WA: When the Wing Luke Museum decided a few years ago to develop a new exhibit commemorating the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066, we never imagined the experience of the Japanese American incarceration would parallel so closely with our political climate today.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, resulting in the forced removal and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans. They were charged with no crime. The cause of their imprisonment was their ancestry. Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton later identified the causes of WWII injustice as: racial prejudice, wartime hysteria and failed leadership.

On February 17, 2017, The Wing opens a new exhibit, *Year of Remembrance: Glimpses of a Forever Foreigner*, which through the artwork of Roger Shimomura and the poetry of Lawrence Matsuda, explores the historic and contemporary issues of racism, discrimination and human rights. The exhibit’s goal is to educate and prevent injustice from happening again to other American groups who are ethnically, religiously or racially different.

About Roger Shimomura: Shimomura’s artwork addresses sociopolitical issues of ethnicity. Born in Seattle, he spent two early years of his childhood in Minidoka (Idaho), one of 10 concentration camps for Japanese Americans during WWII. Shimomura’s work is in the permanent collections of more than 100 museums nationwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, National Portrait Gallery and the American Art Museum. Shimomura’s artwork and stereotypes collection was featured in the Wing Luke Museum’s 2009 exhibit, *Yellow Terror: The Collections and Paintings of Roger Shimomura*. What he hopes visitors will take away from this new exhibit – “the current public political discourse reflects how much the standards of reason have deteriorated. Hopefully this exhibition and associated programming will remind the viewers of the consequences of repeating past mistakes.”

About Lawrence Matsuda: Matsuda was born in the Minidoka, Idaho Concentration Camp during World War II. He has a Ph.D. in education from the University of Washington and was an educator and school administrator. Currently he is a poet and author. What he hopes visitors will take away from the exhibit – “to understand the facts and emotions related to the World War II forced incarceration, so that if it happens again they can make clear and informed decisions about what they should do next.”

Related events:

- **Thursday, February 16, 6pm – Exhibit opening reception, open to the public**
- **Saturday, February 18, 4-5:30pm – Artist Talk and Poetry Reading**
Meet **Roger Shimomura** and **Lawrence Matsuda** as they examine their works that interpret and reflect on the incarceration of Japanese American during WWII, and relate them to contemporary times. Book signing will be available after the event. Tickets \$15/general public; \$10/members.

The *Year of Remembrance* exhibit will be on display through February 11, 2018.

For more info about the exhibit, visit wingluke.org/year-remembrance

Year of Remembrance: Glimpses of a Forever Foreigner

Press images

For hi-res image files, contact Margaret at msu@wingluke.org (one-time reproduction rights only)



American Citizens, Roger Shimomura, 2015, lithograph
Courtesy of the artist



Classmates, Roger Shimomura, 2015, acrylic on canvas
Courtesy of the artist